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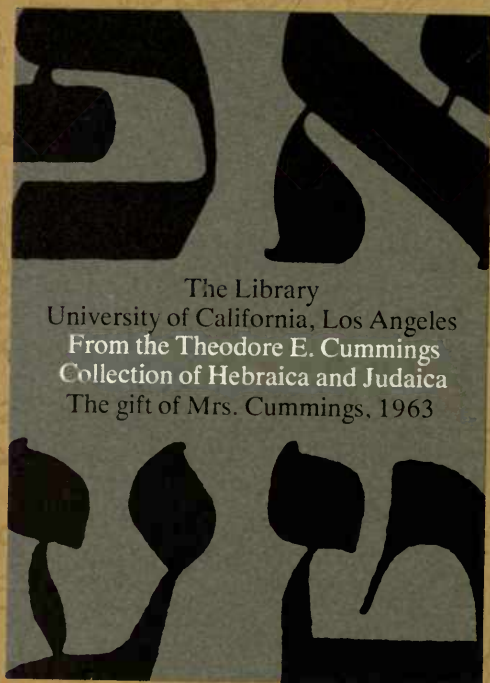
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דרך אמונה :

THE WAY OF FAITH.

*The profits arising from the sale of this work will be distributed
in a series of numbers amongst the humble classes of our brethren.*

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דרך אמונה

THE
WAY OF FAITH:

A MORAL AND RELIGIOUS GATECHISM OF THE PRINCIPLES
OF THE JEWISH FAITH.

BY THE LATE

REV. DR. RAPHAEL MELDOLA,

LATE CHIEF RABBI OF THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE
JEWS' CONGREGATION.

TRANSLATED FROM THE HEBREW BY THE

REV. D. MELDOLA,

PRESIDING RABBI OF THE SAID CONGREGATION.

SEC. I.—PART I.

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A D D R E S S.

TO OUR BELOVED BRETHREN OF THE HOUSE OF
ISRAEL OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

שלום לכם

DEAR BRETHREN,—It is with sentiments of real affection that I address and dedicate to all those who hold the faith of our fathers this small treatise; and I do so without any reference to the rank or station in life of any such to whom these pages may come. We are all brethren, whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned; and all are alike interested, or ought to be so, in the maintenance of the essentials of our faith. Our religion is founded upon Divine facts, and upon Divine commandments, and it is by faith that those facts are received as such, and that those commandments are duly observed. Faith is the root and foundation of our obedience to the law, and is the chief characteristic by which a true profession of our religion is distinguished. It was the firm conviction of these prin-

ciples which induced my late revered Father to compose his excellent and useful work, “The Way of Faith”—דרך אמונה—(anxiously desirous of discharging his duty as pastor towards his flock, he intended it as a guide to the religious education of Israelites,) consisting of a complete catechism for the instruction of our community, divided into sections suited to the three stages of life—commencing with the most simple question and answer for the youthful student of religious truth, and progressively adapted to those of mature years, whereby all that will submit to receive instruction are taught the fundamental points of our most holy faith, and are led to know the truth, and encouraged and assisted to conduct themselves in the world according to the word by the mouth of the prophet—“He hath shewed thee, O man! what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Micah vi. 8).

The task of composing this catechism was regarded by my Father as a very important object, and one, therefore, upon which he bestowed much labour and pains,—carefully consulting, as he proceeded, all the most profound expositions of our laws, and the most eminent authors, in order that

he might herein discover and extinguish doctrines which are pernicious, and establish and maintain only the pure axioms of our faith. And, indeed, the task which he undertook and accomplished was one for which none could be competent but a Rabbi of profound learning and intimate acquaintance with our laws,—enlightened by a knowledge of the sciences. That my father, the late Dr. Raphael Meldola, who for four and twenty years filled the high and important office of Chief Rabbi of the ancient Congregation of Sephardim, possessed those requisites will be admitted, by recalling some particulars of the history of his life.

It has been said concerning him, in an obituary written soon after his death,—“Our Rabbi at an early age exhibited proofs of an extraordinary endowment of mind. After proceeding through a regular course of studies, at the age of fifteen he was admitted a member of the first Rabbinical University, where he had the opportunity of associating with the most learned men of the age, and of prosecuting his inquiries with assiduity. His successive ecclesiastical promotions gave proof of his early piety and learning, and in the year 1803, after he had received the degree of *Rab*, or High Rabbi, he was further honoured by the appoint-

ment of judge to try all cases amongst his own people. This privilege was then enjoyed by the Jews in Italy. In the year 1805 the Portuguese and Spanish congregation of London made application to the different principal congregations of Europe for a suitable character to be their chief and ruler. The result was highly beneficial to themselves : for in the person of Dr. Raphael Meldola they found concentrated every requisite for his professional duties, and a range of scientific and literary acquirements. He was celebrated for his discourses. His great end was the discovery of truth, and the dissemination of scientific and pious instruction amongst his people. He published a valuable and interesting work, called *קרבת מנחה*, *Korban Minha*, (Livorno, 5551—1791,) a literary comment on, and explanation of the service of the High Priest, *כהן גדול*, which is read at synagogue on the fast day of *Kipoor*. After which he published *חופת חתנים*, *Hupat Hatanim*, (Livorno, 5557—1797,) universally applauded, and wherein he has shown his abilities in the mathematical, as well as the rabbinical branches of knowledge.”*

In evidence of my father's solicitude for the promotion of a proper system of education for the

* The Gentleman's Magazine for October, 1828, p. 377-8.

nation at large, it may be mentioned, that twelve months previous to his death he published a letter upon the subject, dedicated to his friend D. A. Lindo, Esq., dated 19th June 1827. His characteristic zeal in the cause, and his enlightened views upon the subject, are therein conspicuous. "It is education," he observed, "you well know, Sir, that lays the basis of the future character—that developes the mental energies, and affords a supply of wholesome and nutritious food; and that it is only by the adoption of such a course, conducted upon liberal and enlightened principles, our nation can rationally expect to keep pace with the march of intellect and retain its station in the scale of society, 'For this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, &c., and say surely, this great nation is a wise and understanding people,' Deut. iv. 6. And again; "In laying the foundation of a liberal education who can be conceived so proper to direct the studies of others, as he who has devoted his own attention and employed his whole time in the study of the law, and those branches of science so closely connected with its exposition and illustrations. Such an one and such an one only, can render efficient aid to the instructive mind in its pursuit after knowledge."

The important office which he sustained, and the occupation of much of his time by persons who, from all parts, consulted him, as also his great bodily infirmities, from which he suffered during the last seven years of his life, prevented his preparing and correcting the whole of his manuscript work for the press. Soon after his decease, as a great portion of it had had the benefit of his mature revisal, I resolved to publish it, both in Hebrew and English, entire in two volumes. With this view, I issued a prospectus and proposals for its publication by subscription, but did not obtain the encouragement necessary to warrant so considerable an undertaking.* The increasing interest which is now taken in the instruction of youth, and the numerous enquiries which are made for elementary works, have led me to think that a favourable time has arrived to present my brethren with at least a portion of the work. It consists altogether of three distinct, and in themselves complete sections, each of which is divided into brief lessons; and of which the present forms a part of the first section. The Hebrew which although written in the purest style, I at

* It is but just on my part to acknowledge with gratitude the encouragement I received from those gentlemen, who at that time came forward as supporters and benefactors, and whose names will appear in the list of subscribers in the next part.

present omit. In this form I entertain the hope that the design will be favorably received, and that these pages will be found eminently useful.

I have only to add that gain is far from being my object by this publication, but that the profits, if any should be derived from it, will be devoted to the continuance of the series, and also the production of some of my own writings; for it has ever been the earnest promptings of my heart to communicate to my fellow-men whatever knowledge Providence may have favoured me with, and to be an instrument however humble, in promoting true wisdom, which alone conduces to real well-being and happiness. That the Divine blessing may rest upon every reader, and that they may “*be all taught of the Lord*” is the sincere prayer of their devoted

דורש טוב לעמו.

D. MELDOLA.

6, Gt. Alie St., Goodman's Fields.

6th Heshvan, 5609—2nd Nov., 1848.

* * * A translation of the Author's very instructive preface to the Catechism will appear in the next part.

LINES TO THE MEMORY OF THE REVERED AUTHOR
BY THE TRANSLATOR.

אבי ! ראה זאת התורה מזהרת
יתרון אשר על כל קנין קנית
התעוררי חכמה עד לכה נסתרת
התנשאי כי בא אורך קוית
בו משביב אש דת נפשך נקשרת
מושב אלהים לשבת עליה
לך מעלות הנפש הכותרת
כי כל חמודות רתבל-זו בוית
זאת התעודה היא לפאר ועטרת
נועם דרכיה עמך נחית
כה אשרוך מלכי זקני קרת
בין כל בני השכל אבר"ם שרית.
הקור במשכלות שכלך גוברת
על במתיים תלמוד יד* נטית
איתן אמונה את וכליל תפארת
עם הענוה בר לבב חייית
תרחק לשון תרמית : הנף דוברת
דבר אמת תקרב כי בו רצית
שיח רצה נא כעולה נקטרת
הקריב לך דוד אביו היית
הן ! עודך חי עוד יאיר אורך
ולעולמי עד לא יסוף זכרך :
דוד מילדולה :

* חיבוריו יד רמ"ה : על הש"ס. יד המלך על הרמבם

THE WAY OF FAITH.

LESSON I.*

THE LAW.

Rabbi.—Since you have told me from what race or people you are descended, can you tell me what obligations are incumbent upon you, and what duties you are bound to perform as a child of Israel?

Pupil.—The Lord having, through love, revealed the heavenly law on Mount Sinai to the children of Israel, enjoined it on our forefathers; and this law, which was declared by the mouth of Moses, the chief of our prophets, we are commanded by Moses himself to observe, according to its import, in the same manner as it has been observed by our forefathers who, for themselves and their seed, swore to adhere to this law strictly.

R.—Give me the derivation of the term law, and explain its meaning?

* This commences the third lesson in the original MS., the first and second lessons being omitted, as the questions and answers are similar to what is contained in most elementary works on this subject.

P.—The term תורה law is derived from the verb ירה, *to instruct*. The object of the law is to point out to us the path of righteousness, and to remind us of those duties which we are imperatively called upon to regard as the commandments of the Lord. And hence, by paying a due obedience to its injunctions, our virtue will become strengthened, and we shall be placed in a position to hope for the favour of the Most High.

R.—For what prominent object has our law been given?

P.—The law has a twofold object: First—to implant in our hearts the resolution to fulfil our duty towards God. And secondly—to exhort us to fulfil our duties towards man. Such is the great and important principle on which the whole law is founded, and by the observance and strict performance of those duties which the law prescribes, every Israelite will arrive at the very perfection of happiness in the state of a blessed immortality.

R.—Where is there a compendium of those duties to be found?

P.—Such are the contents of the Ten Commandments, which constitute the substance of the whole of the laws comprehended in the Pentateuch. The whole House of Israel heard these laws delivered by God, through Moses our teacher; as we read, “And God spake all these words, saying, &c.” (Exod. xx). Also, “These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly, &c.” (Deut. v. 22). Also, “did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of fire, as thou hast heard and live.” (Deut. iv. 33). In com-

memoration of that moment, the most important in the history of the world since the days of creation, we rise in our houses of prayer when we hear the reading of the Ten Commandments, even as our fathers stood around the mount, when they heard the laws promulgated by the voice of Divine Majesty. These commandments were written on two tables of testimony, as written: "and the tables were the work of God," (Exod. xxxii. 16), also, "The Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone, written with the finger of God." (Deut. ix. 10). These tables were also placed in the Ark, in the Holy of Holies, as is testified in the text, saying, "And I put the tables in the ark which I have made, &c., &c." (Deut. x. 5); all which you have pointed out to me in the course of our Scripture-reading.

LESSON II.

DUTIES TOWARDS GOD.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

FIRST COMMANDMENT.

אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ • אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים :

"I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."

This first commandment instructs us that we are

faithfully to believe that there is but one God, who is the sole Creator of all beings, and of every existence that, by his omnipotence all creation has been called into existence from nothing.

It is He that brought our ancestors out of the land of Egypt, and revealed Himself unto them by commencing His laws with this declaration:—

“I am the Lord thy God, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, &c.” Thus were we taught that there is a God who possesses an unlimited power (as the word אֱלֹהִים, *Eloah*, denotes), and that the deliverance out of Egypt, and those miraculous events which attended it, were not accidental occurrences attributable to blind chance; but that they were originated, designed, and executed by that great power, in fulfilment of the promise and covenant made many centuries before with our patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It is therefore justly laid down by the luminaries of tradition, that the belief in this first commandment is the main spiritual pillar of our religious edifice, and without holding it unconditionally, no man can have a share in the spiritual inheritance of Israel.

SECOND COMMANDMENT.

לֹא-יְהִי לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עַל-פָּנָי : לֹא-תַעֲשֶׂה-
 לְךָ-פֶסֶל , וְכָל-תְּמוּנָה אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׁמַיִם , מִמַּעַל
 וְאֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת וְאֲשֶׁר בַּמַּיִם . מִתַּחַת לָאָרֶץ :
 לֹא-תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לָהֶם וְלֹא-תַעֲבֹדֵם . כִּי אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה

אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֵל קָנָא פִּקֹּד עֵין אֶבֶת עַל-בָּנִים עַל-שְׁלִשִׁים
וְעַל-רִבְעִים לְשָׁנָאִי : וְעָשָׂה חֶסֶד לְאֲלָפִים ! לְאֶהְבִּי
וְלִשְׁמִירִי מִצְוֹתִי :

“Thou shalt have no other Gods before me, thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness that is in Heaven above, or that is in Earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me: and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.”

We are here commanded neither to believe in, nor to worship any other God, or any other object besides the God of Heaven and of Earth.

An Israelite, therefore, who would raise into a Deity any created thing, to serve it by any kind of religious worship, consisting in these four particulars: viz., sacrifices, incense, oblations, and prostrations, though he acknowledged at the same time the supreme power, would trespass the commandment “Thou shalt have no other Gods before me,” &c. The expression *עַל פָּנַי* “before me,” includes all place, all time, and every mode of worship, inasmuch as the Creator is omnipresent and eternal. We are no less prohibited from addressing prayers to angels and saints, as our mediators; we are to address our prayers solely to God himself, and He will answer us; as we read in another part of Scripture—

“for what nation is there so great, who hath God so near to them as the Lord our God is in all that we call upon him.” (Deut. iv. 7.) By the tenor of this commandment is also prohibited the making of such images as are in use among the idolatrous for purposes of worship.

The object of this strict prohibition manifestly is to save us from temptation, by keeping far from us the means by which we might be lured to the practices of idolatry. The transgression of this prohibitive commandment, and of this alone, is visited by the Lord upon the third and fourth generations of the evil-doers ; whereas it is declared of every other kind of trespass, “every man shall be put to death for his own sin.” (Deut. xxiv. 16.)

THIRD COMMANDMENT.

לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת־שֵׁם־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשׁוּא וְכִי לֹא יִנָּקֶה
יְהוָה אֶת־אִשְׁרֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־שְׁמוֹ לְשׁוּא :

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”

This commandment instructs us that we ought not to take a rash and vain oath by the name of God, for we ought to impress it well upon our minds, that God, blessed be his name, liveth, and that the awe of His Majesty transcends our conception : accordingly we are

bound to utter his name with reverence and humility, but not with levity or indifference on trivial occasions.*

A profane use of the Divine name for the purpose of corroborating the veracity of our assertions, and an irreverent performance of prayer, are alike condemned by the letter and the spirit of this prohibitive commandment.

The following are sentiments of Aben Ezra on the same subject, he says—"The gravity of this trespass is plainly expressed in the text—'for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain,' &c.—

As oaths by the name of God are so frequently in the mouths of people, the prohibition and the punishment were rendered the more severe; murder, theft, and adultery, are heinous crimes, yet it is not so easy for the wicked to gratify their evil inclinations towards these sins on all occasions, from fear of detection and other impediments: but he that is inclined to take oaths in vain, may utter the Divine name many times a day without hindrance; at length his conscience becomes callous, and if reproved for his profaneness, he vain excuses himself by saying that it is but a custom of speech with him; nay, there are some who pretend to a particular merit for having the name of God frequently in their mouths on all occasions."

Again, the man of strong and dangerous passions will desist from his evil practice when his wild appetite is satiated: but the injury inflicted on the morals of a people by the pernicious example of habitual profaneness, is constant, progressive, and hence incalculable.

* The particulars of that commandment, and the different characters of oaths, are specified and treated upon at large in Talmud Code Sebuot 19.

FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

זָכוֹר אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ : שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד
וַעֲשִׂיתָ כָּל-מְלֶאכֶתְךָ • וַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת
לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא-תַעֲשֶׂה כָל-מְלָאכָה אַתָּה ! וּבִנְךָ-
וּבִתְךָ עַבְדְּךָ וַאֲמָתְךָ וּבְהֶמְתְּךָ וּגְרֶךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ •
כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת-יָמִים עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ
אֶת-הַיָּם וְאֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-בָּם וַיָּנַח בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי עַל-
בֶּן בְּרַךְ יְהוָה אֶת-יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת וַיְקַדְּשֵׁהוּ :

“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy: six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.”

This commandment involves the most essential principle in our religion; so much so, that our Rabbies declared that this one command balances the whole of the remaining laws. For, by keeping that day sacred, we assert the grand point of the belief in the creation: as it is expressed—“for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day.” Reason dictates to us therefore

to honour that day and to keep it holy—namely, to abstain by word and action from all kinds of works and profane occupations, but to devote it entirely to sacred objects, to fix in our hearts the belief in the creation, which is the foundation of revealed religion and that of the whole of the Divine Law.

The tenor of this commandment is, that we are bound to devote one day in every week to the remembrance of the revealed truth; that in six days the visible world was created, and that the seventh day was sanctified as a day of rest by the Maker of All. The belief of the fact which is stated as the motive for the holiness of the Sabbath contradicts the arrogant assumption of the “eternity of matter,” and is therefore of the utmost importance in our religion, which acknowledges an Omnipotent Creator.

Besides the commemoration of the creation, there is another object the commemoration of which is an equally essential point in the Mosaic faith—namely, that of the deliverance from Egypt. While in Egyptian bondage, our ancestors were deprived of every bodily and mental comfort,—of rest and leisure for devotion; but by the mighty hand of the Lord they were restored to liberty, and made the keepers of that revealed religion which by their instrumentality was propagated over the surface of the earth.

We find this second and no less important sanction for the institution of the Sabbath specified in the Ten Commandments in the Book of Deuteronomy (v., 15)—“And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, &c.; wherefore the Lord thy God commanded

thee to keep the Sabbath day, &c.” By the expression *remember*, we are also commanded verbally to announce, the sanctity of that day—namely, by reading the “sanctification,” קְדוּשָׁה (*Kedush*), at the entry; and the “distinction,” הַבְּדִלָּה (*Habdalah*), at the end of the Sabbath day: thus to distinguish symbolically between the day of rest and the working days, all tending to the great objects of faith—namely, that of inculcating the belief in the creation, and in the miraculous deliverance of our fathers from Egyptian bondage by the Divine power. As it is contrary to the *letter* of the law to undertake bodily labor on the Sabbath day; so it is contrary to the spirit of the law to make of the Sabbath an occasion of riotous sensuality. The Sabbath of the Lord ought to be devoted to such devotional exercises of the mind as will not fail to have an exhilarating influence on the spirit, freed from the trammels of daily toil.

LESSON III.

DUTIES TOWARDS OUR NEIGHBOUR.

FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

כְּבֹד אֶת-אָבִיךָ וְאֶת-אִמְךָ , לְמַעַן יָאָרְכוֹן
 יְמֶיךָ עַל הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
 נָתַן לָךְ

“Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”

Reason and nature dictate the duty enjoined upon us in this commandment, since every one is bound to be grateful and obedient to his benefactors. If we consider that parents not only give to their offspring the treasure of life, but also the far more valuable gifts of untiring attention and zealous care from birth to the years of maturity, the duty which we owe to our paternal benefactors requires no additional recommendation.

Holy though this commandment is, even in its obvious and literal sense, still its spirit leads to still nobler duties. In it we behold, at the same time, an incentive to obey, to love, and to revere God, our creator and perpetual benefactor, the preserver of our existence, and that of our forefathers, Him that gave us life, endowed us with an intellectual soul, and fitted us for immortality. By the same law, then, which dictates filial affection towards our earthly parents, we are directed to the contemplation of the unbounded gratitude ever due from us to our great Heavenly Father.

From the same commandment, too, our sages rightly deduce the duty of obedience and respect towards our social superiors.

SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

לֹא תִרְצֹחַ :

“Thou shalt not kill.”

The force of this commandment is intelligible to the mind of every human being, since God created man in his own image—namely, endowed him with an intellectual soul, a part of his own essence, and blessed him

that he should "be fruitful and should multiply," &c. He destined man to be the guardian and the cultivator of this his earthly abode, but not a wilful destroyer of its inhabitants.

It is to be observed that at a very early period of man's history it was divinely announced that "he that sheddeth the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed." It is held by our elders that not only is *he* guilty of transgressing this law that murderously sheds his neighbour's blood, but also he, no less, that maliciously injures his neighbour's honour, by any public act or speech.

Agreeably to this, the authors of the Mishnah say, "he that insults his fellow-creature publicly has no share in the world to come." (Abboth, sec. iii, les. 11).

Many are the wholesome lessons to be deduced from this commandment, to guide us in our conduct towards our fellow-men, and for this salutary purpose it has been copiously cited in the writings of our sages. We may resume them all in this one injunction—to abhor the exercise of all manner of oppression towards those whom we may get in our power.

It is self-evident that this commandment lays on every man the obligation to remove to the best of his ability all causes of bodily danger to his neighbour, as declared by the text, "Thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof—that thou bring not blood upon thine house." (Deut. xxii. 8).

In connection with this subject, we learn, that he who strikes or vexes his fellow-creature, or he who sees his fellow-creature in a state of danger is bound to save him

with all might, and the neglect of doing so morally amounts to the same crime as that of shedding a fellow-creature's blood wilfully. Hence we read, "neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour." (Lev. xix. 16.) Mischievous deeds and calumniation are to be reckoned among the causes of bloodshed, of the truth whereof we have an example in the account of the slaughter of the priests at Nob, by order of King Saul, who listened to the calumny of Doeg the Edomite. (1 Sam. xxii.)

To give false evidence so as to cause a man's death, or to give him a bad advice which may cause death is also a breach of this commandment. It must also be observed, that the heinous crime of suicide is one of the crimes contemplated by this commandment, as being an act of irreparable destruction. There is no difference between the culprit who deprives the world of one of his fellow-creatures, and the one who takes away his own life. He that gave life has the power of taking it, according to his own unlimited will and pleasure; but the depositary has no right wilfully to make away with his trust. Thus we interpret the principle of the Divine words—"And surely your blood of your lives will I require." (Gen. ix. 5). With great propriety have our Rabbies declared—"He that commits suicide has no share in the world to come."

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

לֹא תִנָּאֵף :

"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

The sanctity of marriage, which is the basis of all domestic happiness, and this, in its turn, the only guarantee of public peace and prosperity, is especially protected by this divine commandment. As you increase in experience, you will have ample opportunities of learning, that, in proportion as a people respects chastity and purity of manners, it is brave, independent, and humane.

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

לֹא תִגְנוֹב :

“Thou shalt not steal.”

Taking into consideration the foregoing commandments, the transgressors of which are all liable to capital punishment, we may infer that this commandment is also of that order,—that the transgressors of this are also liable to the punishment of death; wherefore this prohibition is believed to have especial reference to the act of man-stealing: for thus we read in another part of Scripture, viz.—“He that stealeth a man and selleth him, &c., he shall surely be put to death.” (Exod. xxii. 16). As for such who steal effects, or any goods of pecuniary worth, their punishment is specified in other places of Scripture, and consists in an infliction of pecuniary fines, either double, three-fold, or four-fold the amount stolen. Still, in a wider sense, it may well be interpreted to include the condemnation of theft in general. This commandment includes the prohibition of keeping false weights and false measures, and of deceiving

a man in the acts of commerce, to contravene which, is equal to the commission of theft. Moreover, he that finds any property belonging to his fellow-man, and does not return the same to its proprietor, or he that keeps back the daily wages of the labourer, also commits a breach of this commandment, as the object of all such actions is the same, viz.—to deprive fellow-men of their property and of the produce of their labour. It ought to be observed that every trespass which a man commits in violation of the ritual law, viz.—such as regulate the relation of man to God, may be atoned for by repentance and confession; but any wrong committed by man in his actions towards his neighbour, can never be expiated, unless he satisfy and reconcile his neighbour. And I have also to advert to another point eminently essential, viz.—not to think that these commandments are to be observed only towards brother Israelites, to the exclusion of non-Israelites. Far from it! We are bound to observe as a rule, that in everything which has a tendency to preserve and promote the happiness of mankind at large, our law admits no distinction of nation, creed, or class: for one God has created us, and one father is common to us all. The Rabbies class under the head of this commandment, the prohibition of all acts tending to foster practices of dishonesty, and the endeavour to screen the dishonest from the vigilance of the guardians of the law. (See *Maimonides*, Vol. 4—הלכות גניבה פרק ה'). By way of analogy we also infer from this commandment the duty of avoiding hypocrisy, which is—"to steal the hearts and minds of people," styled in Hebrew—גנבת רעות, as is

done by those who speak in one way and act in another. So the Scriptures say: "And Absalom stole the hearts of the men, &c." (2 Sam. xv. 6).

NINTH COMMANDMENT.

לֹא-תֵעָנֶה בְּרֵעֶךָ עַד שָׁקֶר :

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

The reason of this commandment is obvious, for even as true evidence is the most useful guide in human transactions, so false evidence tends to the confusion of right and wrong.

From this commandment we deduce the following important rules, as standing in a natural relation to the furnishing of false evidence:—not to propagate injurious reports, to the prejudice of a neighbour, רֵעַ—*fellow-man*—of whatever creed or class he may be, and much less to invent such reports; to abstain from fixing a stigma on the character of a neighbour, even though we may deem him deserving of reproach, because our judgment may be erroneous, but the injury inflicted by us would be certain. In fine, we should endeavor to incline our minds towards a favourable judgment of our neighbour, rather than otherwise, lest we fall into the grievous sin of bearing false witness against the innocent.

TENTH COMMANDMENT.

לֹא תַחְמֹד בֵּית רֵעֶךָ ' לֹא-תַחְמֹד אִשְׁתִּי רֵעֶךָ וְעַבְדּוֹ
וְאִמָּתוֹ וְשׁוֹרוֹ וְחֲמֹרוֹ וְכָל אֲשֶׁר לְרֵעֶךָ :

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour’s.”

The object of this commandment is, to warn us against the employment of cunning for the purpose of obtaining possession of our neighbour’s property or right. Though the perpetrator of such an act of fraud proposed to remunerate the defrauded party for the loss of such property or right, the deed would still come under the head of the transgressions provided for in this tenth commandment, in which the employment of any stratagem whatever for such a purpose as is cited above, is absolutely condemned. The reason of this law is evident. The indulgence of covetousness induces men gradually to use violence, to avail themselves of unlawful proceedings, and, at length, to scruple at nothing, provided the guilty purpose can be secured. Of which we behold an example in Scripture, where Ahab, King of Israel, having been refused the Vineyard of Naboth of Jezreel, is represented to have prosecuted his plan with stratagems, viz.—by way of false accusations, and false evidences (1 Kings xxi.), by which means Naboth was killed, and the king obtained the vineyard. History furnishes, unfortunately, but too many examples of the ravages caused among mankind by the prevalence

of covetousness, especially when that sin enflamed the hearts of potent monarchs and ambitious conquerors. Although we have explained the commandment in this place to refer particularly to *acts* produced by covetousness; still we ought not to omit that included within this commandment is the rule, that we ought to watch over our *desires*, lest they grow irresistible and produce the lamentable effects of which we have spoken. Hence we find, in the repetition of the tenth commandment, in Deuteronomy (v., 21), the term תַּתְּאוּה, which imports “desire;” and our sages have bequeathed to us the pithy maxim—envy, strong desires, and ambition cut off a man’s life. On the other hand the Talmud relates, that, when R. Nehunia was complimented on the cheerfulness which distinguished him in his advanced years, he replied,—I have never felt gratified by the humiliation of my neighbour; have never lain down with an evil wish to any man; nor have I ever been greedy after wealth! (Megilla, fol. 28.)

מימי לא נתכבדתי בקלון חברי ולא עלתה על
מטתי קללת חברי ותרן בממוני הייתי (מגילה כ"ח).

וידאתו • להעביר גילולי המינות מן הארץ להשיב לו חרפתו •
וה' יעזרנו על דבר כבוד שמו לעבדו בלבב שלם לעשות
רצונו ומצותו:

קלא כה דברי פה לונדון הבירה בשנת זה השער לה'
העומד לשרת בקדש ק"ק ספרדים תוך אמוני עם
סגולה:

רפאל מילדולה

בבמהרר חזקיהו זלה"ה:

עתה יבוש יעקב ולא עתה פניו יחורו כי בראות נערינו נטעי נעמנים אשר בנינו כנטיעים כל רואיהם ימירום כי הם זרע ברובי ה' ואמרו רק עם חכם ונבון הגוי הגדול הזה ולא יראו החוצה כמה בורים ועמי הארצות אשר לחרפה הם לנו ולאומתינו הנבחרת: מעתה אשא עיני אל המלמדים שמעו נא דברי ואדברה אחלי יבוננו דרכיהם כי ידריכו ללמד דעת לתלמדיהם לכל א' לפי שניו, גם דברי נגד כל ישראל באזניהם האנשים והנשים להבנים בני ולבנות בנותי אוחיל ואבקש שאל יליו מעיניהם לשום שכל ולקרא בספר זח בנפש חפצה מידי יום ביומו אם מעט ואם הרבה שזה עיקר גדול בתורה כי אלו הויכוחים הן הם יסודיה ואין העולם מתקיים בלי יסודותיו, ואנכי היודע ועד כי הן אמת שלמאמינים בני מאמינים ואמונת תורתנו לא נכרת מפיהם יגיע אליהם התועלת אבל לאותם שכבר קדמה להם ארס המינות והאפיקורסות נכנס בתוך קרבם כל דרכי האמונה רחוקים חמה מהם ומדעותיהם הכוזבות. אבל זאת נחמתי כי ראה יראו שדנו הדבר מעצמם בקראותם בספרי מינים בלי ידיעת שום דבר, מיסודי תורתנו הקדושה מדרכיה והקדמותיה. הן תורה שבכתב, הן תורה שבע"פ, והשכל מחייב שמוע בין אחיכם ושפטתם צדק ואולם אם יגיע התועלת מהספר אפילו לא מאלף יהיה זה דים לחלקי מכל עמלי נגד אלו האנשים להוציא יקר מזולל:

ועדי בשמים כי כוונתי בחיבורי הלזה לשמו יתעלה לקנאת ה' צבאות ולפרסם אלהותו. יכירו וידעו כל יושבי תבל כי הוא היוצר הוא הבורא אשר המציא יש מאין ואין זולתו, להדריך את הבנים בסדר הזה לקרבם לתורתו

ע"כ בדרך פתיחה הבאתי משנת בן ה' שנים וכו' עם
 באורה להדריך בדרך וסדר הלימוד איך יתנהג האיש
 הישראלי למקטון ועד גדול. גם הבאתי בסדר נכון ביאור
 יג' מדות שהתורה נדרשת בהם אשר ממי מקור מים
 חיים משכתיהו ה'ה רבנן תקיפי מאריות גברו. ובחדרי
 ים התלמוד חקרו וכל ישר הולך בעיניו יראה עמקן של
 דברים עד היכן מגיעים. ואחר הפתיחה הזאת יבא הדרך
 להשריש בלבבותם עיקרי תורתנו בדרך ויכוח בשלשה מחלקות
 וכל אחד מהם אחלק ללימודים בראשונה יבואו הלימודים
 קלי ההתבוננות לילדים כבן ו' כבן ז' כי אינם יכולים
 להעמיק בענינים בדרכי ההקש ואחריה השנית בסדר
 המדרגה כפי שכלו ושניו של בן עד הגיעו אל הג' כבן
 טו' או טז' כי לו נאה ולו יאה הויכוח הזה הראוי לכל
 בר דעת אשר הוא מיוסד בדרכי הפילוסופיאה וההקש מחכמינו
 הפילוסופים המעמידים הענינים באותות ובמופתים ואחר
 החלק הראשון הנוגע לאמונה, אביא בדרך ויכוח מה שנוגע
 לדקדוק לשוננו הקדושה כי ידוע שבלעדו לא ירים איש
 את ידו ואת רגלו להבין במקרא לקרוא ולדבר על נכון.
 גם בזה חלקתיו ללימודים לפי כחו של בן:

אחר כך יבא מאמר נכבד דבר הצריך לכל נפש ולכל
 בני העולם בכלל הלא היא חכמת האיטיקא כי
 בלתה במה נחשב מין האנושי ואם האיש רק הוא ממנה כעיר
 פרא אדם יחשב:

אחר כל אלה כמשפט הראשון אציגה ויכוח בין הרב
 לתלמיד חלק הנוגע לידיעת שאר החכמות למען נערי
 בני ישראל אשר חשקה נפשם לדעת החכמה יכירו וידעו
 בלהיק על מה אדניה הטבעו ומאין תבא. ובזה לא

זאת ועוד יש מהם אשר הביאו אחרית דבר אל ראשיתו להכניס ולכלול בתוך הלימודים לקטנים חלק הראוי רק לנערים אשר גדלו. וזה הדרך אינה סלולה למלמדים ספר מפני שצריכים לבחור דבר הראוי לכל תלמיד. לפי שניו וכאשר יוכל שאת שכל הנער:

עוד רעה הולה אשר חדשים מקרוב באו אחר החכמים אשר החזיקו באמונתם השלמה ולא זזה ידם מהראשונים המוחזקים באמונה והפילוסופיה האמיתית אחר שמלאו כריסם מספרי מינים הוציאו לאור העולם קאטיקיסמוס להלקם ביעקב ולהפיצם בישראל להשתמש בהם בבתי הספר לנערי בני ישראל ברו דברים אשר לא כן ובעזות מגלים פנים בתורה בטעמי המצות מה שלא נזכר בראשונים והתקלות היוצאות מאלו רבו מלמנות בפרט בדורות הללו שעל זה שנו התנאים והתרו חכמים הזהירו בדבריהם שמא תחובו חובת גלות:

אי לזאת! התאזרתי בכל עוז ונתעוררתי כי הגיעו הדברים בקרב לבי באמרי בבוקר ונהיה אנחנו וצאצאינו כלנו יודעי שמך-לידע ולהכיר עד מקום שיר שכלנו הקצר מגעת גדולתו יתעלה בידיעה וחקירה כדרך שצוה אדוננו רוד לבנו דע את אלהי אביך על כן חברתי וסדרתי החיבור הלזה להדריך בדרך נכונה לנערינו ולבחורי ועם כי אנכי הרואה שבדור הזה רובם ככולם עיני שכלם פקוחים והבן שואל וחוקר בתבונה ודעת כי אינו מספיק להם בספרי מוסר בדרך אמונה בלי חקירה ומופת:

וזה יהיה משפט החיבור ומעשהו בעזר הבורא בהתבונני כי עיקר גדול הוא סדר הלימוד בתורתנו הק' והנהגת המלמד לפי שניו של בן שאם הסדר הזה הוא מקולקל התורה תקרא פלסתר ותאבד יפיה והדרה ופריה לא תתן בעתה והמלמד בדרכיו לא יצליח:

בפיהם ובהשכיל לבותם ו ולא תהא כזאת בישראל ונגרעה נחלת ה' משאר האומות אשר עיקריהם שנורים בפיהם הנקראים (קאטיקסמו) אף' לצעירי ילדיהם, ואם ישאלו אל מי משלנו הנידה נא לנו וקרא עלינו את הקריאה הזאת מאמונתכם ואי מזה עם אתה? שערי תשובה לו ננעלו ודבר שפתים אך למחסור ונמצא שם שמים מתחלל לתת להם דרך להטעות ופתחון פה לעילוי יראתן באמרם אברה אמונתם ונכרתה מפיהם והין ולאו ורפיא בידיהם הן בעון לזאת רבים מעמי הארץ עזבו מקור מים חיים לחצוב להם בורות נשברות לחבק חק נכריה בראותם סדרי עיקריהם מורגלים בפיהם נפתו בערמתם ובמתק שפתותיהם ואם ככה אלו מבחרותם היו מורגלים בעיקרי אמונתנו היו מבחינים שלא שם חלקנו כהם ולא כאלה חלק יעקב. זאת ועוד כי פשטה המספחת בדור הזה שעוסקים בספרי מינים המכחישים בכמה ענינים ובמתק לשונם מפתים לב שומעיהם ובעיניהם דבר נדול הוא מפני שכל הראיות מיוסדות על הפילוסופיאה וזההניון ואומרים אשר הוא כיתר בל תמוט כזה ראה וקדש, ואילו יבינו זאת מעיקרנו שגם הם מיוסדים עפ"י דרכי הפילוסופיאה וזההניון האמיתי ישבילו וידעו כי יש אלהים בישראל ויפקדו את הארורה הזאת המינות ויקברוה והרי זה דומה למי ששתה הארס בכרס מלא שלא יזיק לו ואם יזיק לפחות מיהא לא יסתכן:

אמת אניד כי כבר יצאו לאור העולם* מאלו המחברות ללמד דעת בבית הספר אבל תפסו בקוצר הענינים ואינם ראויים רק לקטנים ואם ינדלו הנערים ותרבה הדעת לחקור ולדרוש אינם מספיקים ביד המלמד להשיבם ולרוות את צמאונם:

* החכמים לקח טיב, קאלימני מודנא:

את העם בפרט לילדים ולבחורי חמד לסדר ולערוך
המושכלות החכרתיים לעיקרי תורתנו השלמה וזוה
נשאים רקנים עד כי יגדלו הנערים ונכנסים בכלל
אנשים טח מראות עיניהם מהשכיל לבותם אם במציאות
ה' תורה מן השמים • שכר ועונש • וזוה יחלק העם ישראל
לג' ראשים:

קראש הא' הוא ההמוני לא ידעו ולא יבינו שהדברים הללו
הם שרשי תורתנו התמימה ויהי להם מצות אנשים
מלומדה ומנהג אבותיהם בידיהם • רק שפתותיהם דובבות
הדברים:

קראש הב' יפנה אל החכמים השלמים מביני דת וטעמיה
בפלפולים מאמינים באמונה שלמה אשר אין בה
דופי אבל לא בדרך חקירה והקש מופתי המביא את האדם
לאמונה אמיתית גלויה ומפורסמת ברורה כשמש ותקועה
בלב האדם כיתד כל תמוט:

קראש הג' ראש ולענה ופנה אל הכפירה עבור חוסר ידיעה
ובתגבורת החומריות שבהם שלא השיגו במושכלות
רוצים להתפלס בשטחות שכלם העכור ויגרשו מימיהם רפש
וטיט! אשר על-זה היה דוה לבי למה נגרע משאר האומות!
ומדוע הדת השלמה והתמימה אשר לא תחסר כל בה
מכמה וכמה חבורים יקרים הם המדברים על כלליה ופרטי
פרטיה הטיבו אשר דברו לא הניחו זוית ופנה כל
אימהם עד מקום התפשטות שכלו ועומק מבינתו-איש איש
ממחבריהם נטה אל הדרך אשר חשקה נפשו כי אין אדם
לומד תורה אלא במקום שלבו הפץ בה ולפי בחינת
נשמתו:

אפס כי עז הדבר שלא נמצא אצלינו ואין אחד בהם
שנתעורר להשלים כתרה של תורה לסדר באופן נכון
עיקרי תורתנו לשומם בספר ויוחקו באומתינו ויהיו שגורים

אם בלמודיות הלא נראה כי חלוקת הארץ תלויה בחכמת צורת הארץ (גיאוגרפיה) שהרי בס' במדבר צייר מרע"ה כל ארץ ישראל בכלל עם תחומיה ונבולותיה לארבע רוחות העולם וביהושוע מתחילת סי' יג עד רוב שאר ספרו מצינו ארץ ישראל נחלקת לחלקים ולחלקי חלקים של מדינות כרכים ועיירות וכפרים הרים ונבעות ימים נהרות ומעיינות (כחרי ח'ב ויכחד י"ב) ותחתיה תעמוד חכמת הגיאומטריאה שעל ידה יצא משפט ישר במידת קרקעות וכיוצא להשוות החלקים המישור לעקוב והרכסים לבקעה כפי מספר הנוחלים: וזאת אשר דבר יוסף על פי התורה אשר הורה לנו מרן הקדוש במדידת קרקע בין אחים או בין שותפין צריך לדקדק בחשבון מדידתו על פי העיקרים המתבארים בכתבי הגימטריא שאפילו מלא אצבע מהקרקע רואים אותה כאילו היא מלאה כרכום (ש"ע ח"מ ס'דל"א י"ו) וכמו כן בענין כלאים וסוכה א"א להבינם בהחלט בלתי כללי החכמה הזאת אשר ביתה נכון עליה, ככה במצות קדוש החדש תקופת השנה הלא היא תלויה בחכמת התכונה כמו שהיו בקיאים הב"ד בזמן שהיו מקדשים על פי הראיה, באופן שמכל צד ופנה נראה שלמותה הפוך בה והפוך בה דכלא בה ארוכה מארץ מדה לבא עד תכונתה והיא כבנין מפואר וארמון על משפטו:

הן אמת כי הרבה חכמים מחוכמים עמלו ויגעו לחבר ספרים מינים ממינים שונים כולם פונים יסבו בלכתן לברר וללבוש עיקרה ויסודותיה על מה אדניה הטבעו כי אין בנין בלא יסודאמנם מהם העמיקו כל כך בדבריהם ובעומק לשונם הפילוסופי שאינם מובנים להמון העם עד שהוכרחו לבארם ולפרשם ואף גם זאת בפירושים שונים ומהם שכתבו על עיקרי הדת שלא כסדרן רק אחת הנה כשנודמן הענין לפי סדר הענינים שעסקו בהם באופן שיכבד הדבר ללומדים דעת

AUTHORS' PREFACE

הקדמת:

הרב אדמ"ר המחבר זצ"ל :

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